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EXAMINER

SHERR, CRISTINA O

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3685

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/914,309	Applicant(s) SAKO ET AL.	
	Examiner CRISTINA OWEN SHERR	Art Unit 3685	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 December 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,41,42,45,48-50 and 52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-5, 41-42, 45-6, 48-50 and 52 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to Applicants' Amendment filed December 8, 2008. Claims 1, 3, 4, 41, and 45 are currently amended. Claims 2, 43, and 51 are currently canceled. Claims 1, 3-5, 41-42, 45-46, 48-50 and 52 are currently pending in this case.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicants' arguments regarding the section 112 rejections of claims 1 and 4, in their currently amended form, are persuasive. The said section 112 rejections of claims 1 and 4 are hereby withdrawn.

3. Applicants' arguments regarding the section 103 rejections of the claims, filed December 8, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

4. Applicants argue, regarding the section 103 rejections of claims 1, 4, 41, and 45, as currently amended, that nothing in the cited prior art discloses, teaches, or suggests a receiving unit "inhibited from one of the use of and an operation of the use permission data, while the controller is sending the use history information to the external device."

5. Examiner respectfully disagrees. We note, firstly, that a wherein clause that merely states the result of the limitations in the claim adds nothing to the patentability or substance of the claim. (*Texas Instruments Inc. v. International Trade Commission* 26, USPQ2d 1010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *Griffin v. Bertina*, 62 USPQ2d 1431 (Fed. Cir. 2002); *Amazon.com Inc. v. Barnesandnoble.com Inc.*, 57 USPQ2d 1747 (CAFC 2001)). In this case, we find that the language following the term "wherein" reflects a result, and thus does not serve to further distinguish the claims from the prior art.

Art Unit: 3685

6. Applicants further, argue, regarding the section 103 rejections of claims 1, 4, 41, and 45, that nothing in the cited prior art discloses, teaches, or suggests a controller configured to send the use history information to the external device through the communication unit when an accumulation of uses of the data reaches a preset value.

7. Examiner respectfully disagrees and directs attention to Stefik2, where

Use-Duration" is used to define an indeterminate (or "open") start time. It sets limits on a continuous period of time over which the contents are accessible. The period starts on the first access and ends after the duration has passed or the expiration date is reached, whichever comes first. For example, if the right gives 10 hours of continuous access, the use-duration would begin when the first access was made and end 10 hours later.

Grammar element 1515 "Meter-Time:=Time-Remaining: Remaining-Use" is used to define a "meter time," that is, a measure of the time that the right is actually exercised. It differs from the Sliding-Interval specification in that the time that the digital work is in use need not be continuous. For example, if the rights guarantee three days of access, those days could be spread out over a month. With this specification, the rights can be exercised until the meter time is exhausted or the expiration date is reached, whichever comes first.

Remaining-Use:=Time-Unit

Start-Time:=Time-Unit

Use-Duration:=Time-Unit

All of the time specifications include time-unit specifications in their ultimate instantiation. (col 22 ln 10-30)

Also,

Art Unit: 3685

Grammar element 1510 "Copy-Count:=(Copies: positive-integer.vertline.0.vertline.unlimited)" provides a condition which defines the number of "copies" of a work subject to the right. A copy count can be 0, a fixed number, or unlimited. The copy-count is associated with each right, as opposed to there being just a single copy-count for the digital work. The Copy-Count for a right is decremented each time that a right is exercised. When the Copy-Count equals zero, the right can no longer be exercised. If the Copy-Count is not specified, the default is one. (col 21 ln 15-25).

8. In both of these cases, use history information, such as how many copies have been made or how many times a document has been accessed, is being monitored, updated and sent to the external device. By default, a preet5 value would be, at least the value at which no more uses are left, such as when the full number of copies have been made or when the document has been accessed the full number of times or for the full number of hours.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 1, 3-5, 41-42, 45-46, 48-50 and 52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stefik et al (US 6,233,684) ("Stefik1") in view of Stefik et al (US 5,628,980) ("Stefik2").

11. Regarding claims 1, 4, 41, 45 and 4 –

Art Unit: 3685

12. Stefik1 discloses a digital data processing apparatus (fig 4) comprising:
- a communicating unit configured to communicate with an external device (e.g. fig 1, fig 3);
 - a receiving unit configured to receive digital data from a recording medium or through the communication unit, use of the received digital data employ use permission data (e.g. fig 5; fig 6; col 9 ln 14-28; col 8 ln 5-38);
 - a memory in which use history information of the digital data has been stored; (col 10 ln 6-18).

Stefik2 discloses, where Stefik1 does not, a controller configured to send the use history information to the external device through the communication unit when an accumulation of uses of the digital data reaches a preset value. (e.g. col 22 ln 57- col 23 10).

13. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Stefik1 and Stefik2 since they refer to each other in their descriptions, and are clearly in the same field of digital rights management.

14. Regarding the limitation of claims 3, 5 –

15. Stefik2 discloses wherein the digital data are one of audio data, video data, still image data, character data, computer graphics data, game software, and a computer program (e.g. col 4 ln 29-32, col 6 ln 37-50, col 3 ln 50-60).

16. Regarding claim 42, 48, 52 –

17. Stefik2 discloses a display unit, wherein the display unit displays a message for urging a user to send the reproduction history data to the exterior element when the

Art Unit: 3685

reproduction history data written in the memory unit reach the predetermined value.

(e.g. col 8 ln 55- col 9 ln 5, table 1).

18. Regarding claim 46 –

19. Stefik2 discloses wherein the control unit sends the reproduction history data stored in the memory unit when the control unit receives data regarding an electronic monitoring permission from the exterior element, the data regarding an electronic monitoring permission being used for reproducing the content data. (e.g. col 22 ln 57- col 23 10).

20. Regarding claim 49 –

21. Stefik2 discloses a second display unit, wherein the second display unit displays an indicator, the indicator changes the length of a predetermined color part in accordance with an amount of available space of the memory unit (e.g. col 8 ln 55- col 9 ln 5, table 1).

22. Regarding claim 50 –

23. Stefik2 discloses a warning display unit for displaying that the reproduction history data written in the memory unit have reached the predetermined value. (e.g. col 8 ln 55- col 9 ln 5, table 1).

24. Examiner's Note: Although Examiner has cited particular columns, line numbers and figures in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant(s), the specified citations are merely representative of the teaching of the prior art that are applied to specific limitations within the individual claim and other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that the applicant(s), in

Art Unit: 3685

preparing the response, fully consider the items of evidence in their entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

Conclusion

25. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

26. Stefik et al (US 5,638,443) disclose a system for controlling the distribution and use of composite digital works.

27. Sims, III (US 6,438,235) discloses media content protection utilizing public key cryptography.

28. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

29. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

30. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CRISTINA OWEN SHERR whose telephone number is

Art Unit: 3685

(571)272-6711. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:00 Monday through Friday.

31. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Calvin L. Hewitt, II can be reached on (571)272-6709. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

32. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

CRISTINA OWEN SHERR
Examiner
Art Unit 3685

/Calvin L Hewitt II/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3685